

**FY2001- WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM (WHIP)
MINNESOTA STATE RANKING CRITERIA**

Applicants Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____ **Phone** _____

_____ **County:** _____

_____ **Tract:** _____

Location (Section, Township):

Acres to be enrolled: _____

Wildlife habitat restoration needs:

Eligibility Checklist: the application is ineligible if any of the following apply.

1. The applicant cannot provide evidence of ownership, or control of the land for the duration of the contract.
2. On/off-site conditions which make success of the project unlikely.
3. The proposed project location is currently enrolled in EWP, WRP, or CRP.
4. The proposed project location is on Federal, state or local government owned land, without prior approval.
5. NRCS contract cost share exceeds \$10,000, without prior approval.
6. An individual applicant owns less than 5 acres.
7. An individual or group application scores less than 140 points.

SUMMARY OF RANKING: (240 points maximum)

Ecological Score _____

Other Score _____

Cost Score _____

Total Score ===== (a minimum of 140 points is required for funding consideration)

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS (140 points maximum)

A. Proximity to important habitats:

- | | |
|---|----|
| 1. Project is within or directly adjacent to, AND will enhance an identified "Priority Conservation Area" listed in Appendix 1. | 20 |
| 2. Project will not compliment identified important habitats. | 0 |

B. Proximity to lakes, streams, rivers ground water connections and wetlands:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Project is directly adjacent. | 20 |
| 2. Project is within 0.25 mile. | 10 |
| 3. Project is between 0.25-1.0 miles. | 5 |
| 4. Project is greater than 1 mile. | 0 |

C. Benefits to endangered, threatened or special concern species:

Species to benefit: _____

- | | |
|---|----|
| 1. Project establishes/manages appropriate cover of listed animals, or establishes/manages appropriate listed plant species. Refer to Appendix #2 for scoring guidance. | 20 |
| 2. All other options. | 0 |

D. Restoration of native habitats:

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Project manages or establishes native habitats. | 20 |
| 2. Project enhances native habitats through establishment of a combination of native and non-native species. | 5 |
| 3. Project manages or establishes all non-native habitats. | 0 |

E. Potential to connect or expand permanent habitat areas (ie. corridors, blocks):

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Project will establish vegetative cover immediately adjacent to, OR will connect existing habitat (state/federal, RIM, WRP, CRP, NGO lands, etc). | 20 |
| 2. Planned acres are within 0.25 mile of existing wildlife habitat. | 10 |
| 3. Planned acres are between 0.25-1.0 miles of existing wildlife habitat. | 5 |
| 4. Planned acres are greater than 1.0 mile from existing wildlife habitat. | 0 |

F. Size of area treated by WHIP contract :

- | <u>UPLAND/WETLAND</u> | OR | <u>STREAM / RIPARIAN PRACTICES</u> | |
|-----------------------|----|------------------------------------|----|
| 1. > 40 acres | | > 500 feet | 20 |
| 2. 21 - 40 acres | | 301 - 500 feet | 15 |
| 3. 5 - 20 acres | | 100 - 300 feet | 10 |
| 4. < 5 | | < 100 feet | 0 |

G. Habitat Quality Improvement. The MN Wildlife Habitat Evaluation System (WHES) will be used to evaluate the baseline and planned condition of the acreage being treated. A minimum "planned" index of 0.4 is required.

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------|----|
| 1. >.5 increase. | Before = | 20 |
| 2. .2 - .5 increase. | After = | 10 |
| 3. < .2 increase. | | 0 |

Ecological Total _____

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (70 points maximum)

A. Long Term Benefits (20 points maximum)

1. Contract length 5 years = 0 points
2. Contract length 10 years = 10 points
3. One or more of the following practices installed = 10 points:
 - * Wetland restoration
 - * Streambank protection
 - * Permanent veg. - trees/shrubs
 - * Forest riparian buffer
 - * Fish stream improvement
 - * Windbreak and renovation

B. Relation to existing specific Resource Management Plan. (LIST):

1. Project is a component of an existing comprehensive management plan. (ie. Agency Project, Forest Stewardship Plan, NGO Project etc) 20
2. Project is not part of a comprehensive plan. (ie. site specific practice) 0

C. Societal benefits - Check those that apply:

- ☐ 0 - 5 pts. - Public education/recreation (ie. demonstration project, outdoor classroom, recreation)
- ☐ 0 - 5 pts. - Surface water protection (ie. riparian and wetland restoration/enhancement)
- ☐ 0 - 5 pts. - Groundwater protection (ie. sinkholes, seeps, wellheads)
- ☐ 0 - 5 pts. - Floodway or flood storage benefits

_____ Total (20 points maximum)

D. Cultural Resources:

1. Project protects, establishes or manages resources of cultural or spiritual significance. 10
2. Other 0

Other Total _____

COST CONSIDERATIONS (30 points maximum)

A. WHIP contract cost.

1. WHIP cost is \leq 50% of contract cost. 10
2. WHIP cost is 51%-75% of contract cost. 0

B. Landowner financial commitment.

1. Landowner financial contribution towards project cost. 10
2. Landowner bore no cost in the project. 0

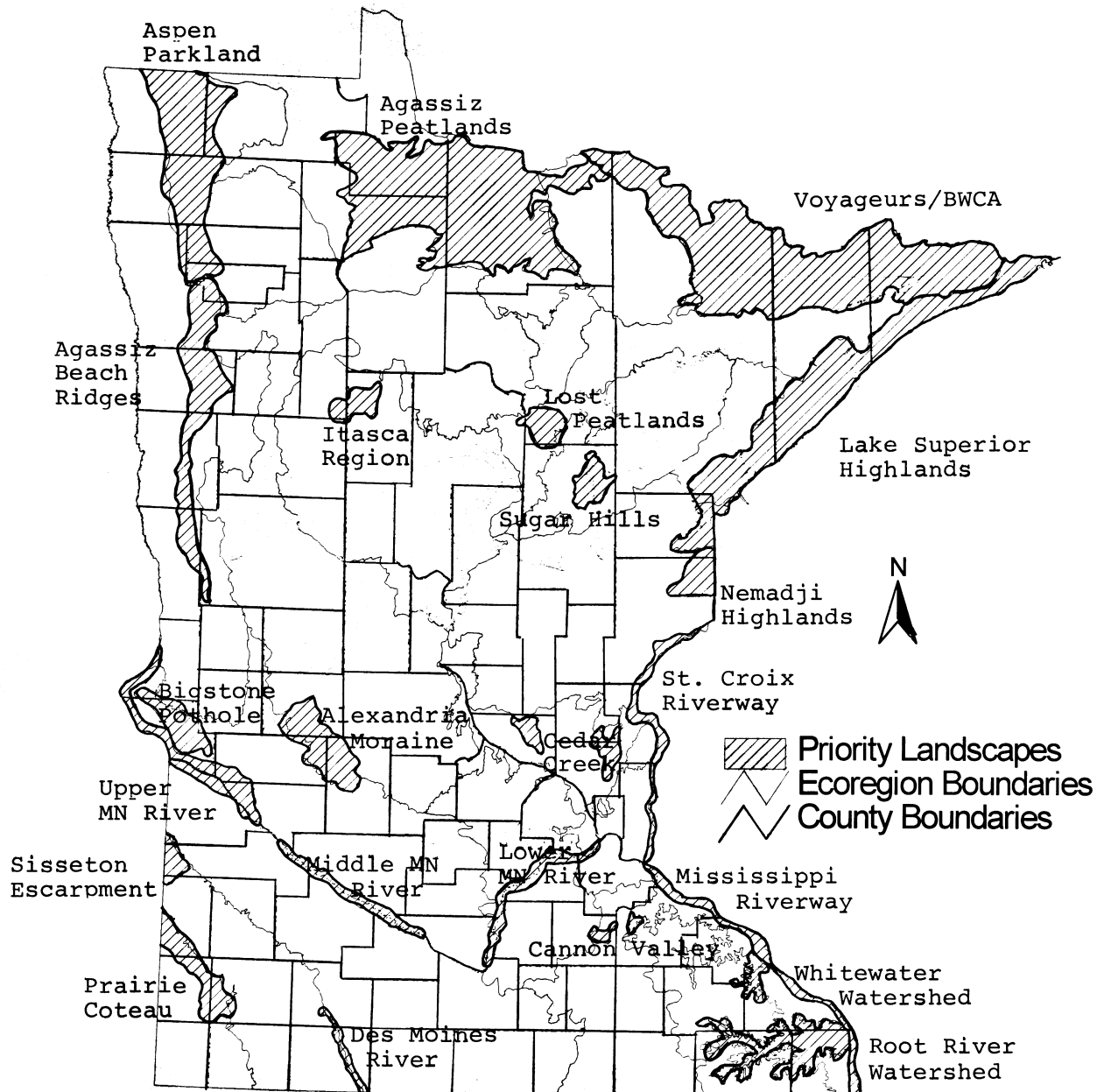
C. Operation and maintenance requirements.

1. Contract comprises non-structural practices requiring minimal to no long term management. (ie. fencing, veg. establishment etc). 10
2. Contract comprises structural measures requiring long term intensive management to maintain practices. 0

Cost Total _____

APPENDIX 1

Priority Conservation Areas for Biodiversity in Minnesota



The Priority Landscapes were developed by the MN DNR Natural Heritage Program. These areas represent concentrations of native habitats, endangered & threatened species, & non-game wildlife. The Ecoregion Boundaries were developed by the MN DNR, University of Minnesota & U.S. Forest Service in 1996. Ecoregions represent areas of similar climate, geology, soils, topography & vegetation.

APPENDIX 2

WILDLIFE HABITAT BENEFITS FEDERAL AND STATE LISTED ENDANGERED, THREATENED, AND SPECIAL CONCERN SPECIES

FEDERAL - Endangered (FE), Threatened (FT) and Candidate (FC).

STATE - Endangered (SE), Threatened (ST), Special Concern (SSC).

SCORING: Review the following species categories (plants, animals, mussels and fish) for potential points (20).

ANIMALS: Use the following matrix to evaluate species identified by the MDNR Natural Heritage Data Base as occurring in the county. Score 20 points if the cover establishment/management meets the requirements outlined in the KEY footnotes 1-3.

SPECIES	GRASS	TREES	WETLAND TYPE
BIRDS:			
Piping Plover (FT, SE)	1	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Peregrine Falcon (ST)	1	1	1 (Palustrine Forest)
Bald Eagle (FT, SCC)	1	1	1 (Palustrine Forest)
Baird's Sparrow (SE)	1	N	N
Henslow's Sparrow (SE)	1	N	N
Sprague's Pipit (SE)	1	N	N
Chest collar Longspur (SE)	1	N	N
King Rail (SE)	N	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Burrowing Owl (SE)	1	N	N
Trumpeter Swan (ST)	N	N	N
Loggerhead Shrike (ST)	1	1	1 (Any Type)
Wilson's Phalarope (ST)	1	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Nelson Sharp Sparrow (SSC)	1	N	1 (Palus Emerg/Shrub)
Short-eared Owl (SSC)	1	N	1 (Any Type)
Red-shouldered Hawk (SSC)	N	1	1 (Palustrine Forest)
Yellow Rail (SSC)	N	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Cerulean Warbler (SSC)	N	1	N
Acadian Flycatcher (SSC)	N	1	N
Common Moorhen (SSC)	N	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Franklin's Gull (SSC)	N	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Marbled Godwit (SSC)	1	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Forster's Tern (SSC)	N	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Hooded Warbler (SSC)	N	1	N
Horned Grebe (ST)	N	N	1 (Palustrine Emergent)
Louisiana Waterthrush (SSC)	N	1	1 (Palust Forest/shrub)
Grtr Prairie Chicken (SSC)	1	N	N
MAMMALS:			
Eastern Spotted Skunk (ST)	1	1	1
No. Pocket Gopher (SSC)	1	1	1
Least Shrew (SSC)	1	1	N
Gray Wolf (FT,SSC)	3	3	3
Prairie Vole (SC)	1	N	2
Woodland Vole (SSC)	1	1	2
Least Weasel (SSC)	1	1	1

SPECIES	GRASS	TREES	WETLAND
Northern Myotis (SSC)	N	1	N
Plains Pocket Mouse (SSC)	1	N	N
Heather Vole (SSC)	1	1	1
Eastern Pipistrelle (SSC)	N	1	N
Smokey Shrew (SSC)	N	1	N
Northern Bog Lemming (SSC)	1	1	1
REPTILES/AMPHIBIANS:			
Massasauga (SE)	1	1	1
Wood Turtle (ST)	1	1	1
Blanding's Turtle (ST)	1	N	1
Smooth Softshell (SSC)	N	N	N
Snapping Turtle (SSC)	N	N	1
Racer (SSC)	1	1	N
Rat Snake (SSC)	N	1	N
Five-lined Skink (SSC)	2	2	N
Four-toed Salamander (SSC)	N	N	1
W. Hognose Snake (SSC)	1	N	1
Gopher Snake (SSC)	1	1	N
Lined Snake (SSC)	1	1	N
Timber Rattlesnake (ST)	1	1	N
Northern Cricket Frog (SE)	1	N	1
BUTTERFLIES:			
Karner Blue Butterfly (FE,SE)	1	1	N
Persius Dusky Wing (SE)	1	1	N
Assiniboia Skipper (SE)	1	N	N
Uncas Skipper (SE)	1	N	N
Uhler's Arctic (SE)	1	N	N
Dakota Skipper (ST)	1	N	N
Ottoo Skipper (ST)	1	N	N
Garita Skipper (ST)	1	N	N
Disa Alpine (SSC)	N	1	1
Leonardus Skipper (SSC)	1	N	N
Nabkov's Blue (SSC)	N	1	N
Powesheik Skipper (SSC)	1	N	N
Grizzled Skipper (SSC)	N	1	1
Phlox Moth (SSC)	1	N	N
Regal Fritillary (SSC)	1	N	N

KEY: N) Practice will not directly benefit listed species.

- 1) If located within 1.0 mile of a documented population, nest, den /breeding site.
- 2) If located immediately adjacent to documented population, breeding/bed site.
- 3) Points for the Gray Wolf may only be awarded for conversion of existing cropland to permanent vegetative cover, in the following counties: Roseau, Lake of Woods, Beltrami, Itasca, St. Louis, Cook, Lake, Koochiching.

VASCULAR PLANTS: Score points if the contract is immediately adjacent to a population identified as occurring in the county based on the MDNR Natural Heritage Data Base.

AQUATIC SPECIES (MUSSELS AND FISH): All Federal and State listed Mollusks and Fish. Score points if offering is located within the local watershed (8 digit HU) adjacent to and upstream of a bed or population identified by the MDNR Natural Heritage Data Base.